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A LETTER

To the Reverend

Lawrence Fogg, D. D.

AND

Dean of *CHESTER*.

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To the Reverend

Laurence Toop, D. D.

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Wherein

His pretended *Vindication* of ſome Paſſages in his new and inconſiſtent *Scheme of Divinity* is

Examin'd and *Confuted.*

By *JOHN EDWARDS*, D. D.

Look ye Blind, that ye may ſee, Iſa. 42. 18.
Demas hath forſaken me, having loved this preſent World, 2 Tim. 4. 10.

LONDON:
Printed by S. KEIMER, for M. LAWRENCE, at the *Angel* in the *Poultry*. MDCCXV.

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[redacted]

A

LETTER

TO THE

Reverend Dr. *FOGG*, &c.

SIR,

THO' I have little hopes of doing any good when I deal with a Perſon who is inconſiſtent with himſelf, and doth not know his own Opinions; one that is always talking of his *decay of Sight*, the *defect of his Eyes*, his *being almoſt Stone-blind*, &c. (as if he thought it material that every one ſhould take Notice of this his Misfortune) and yet is wholly inſenſible of a greater and more notorious Decay, that of his Mind and Judgment;

tho', I ſay, I can entertain but ſmall Hopes of doing good in this Caſe; yet by your *Letter* which you were pleas'd to ſend me, and to publiſh to the World, you have oblig'd me to do what I can towards the Diſcovering the groſs Inconſiſtencies and Abſurdities which your Paper is fill'd with, and towards the opening your Eyes to ſee them, and to be convinc'd of them. I intend not to miſpend my Time and Leiſure in tracing you, Paragraph by Paragraph, but I will only offer ſome brief Remarks on thoſe Paſſages in your *Letter*, which are moſt obnoxious to the Cenſure even of the moſt moderate Judges. I will deſire you to give me leave to expoſe ſome of your falſe and empty Reaſonings, and withal to expreſs my juſt Reſentment of the ill Treatment which I have met with from you; for I bear the Motto of a neighbouring Nation, *Nemo me impune lacceſſet*, No Man ſhall inſult me, and go Scot-free. I am told by ſome of my Friends, That this *Device* hath ſav'd me a great deal of Trouble ſince I have been a Writer, and is the reaſon why ſo few have ventur'd to diſturb me with their impertinent Anſwers and Replies.

I can't but in the firſt Place obſerve in your 4th Page, your Vanity in expecting that I ſhould give a *Laudatory Character*

(as you call it) of your *whole* late Book, because I speak favourably of some *part* of it. You should rather have interpreted this as an Argument of my Sincerity and Impartiality, than have applauded your self in every Part of your Undertaking. I don't understand the *Lumping* of Books, and taking them by *Wholesale*, which you wou'd seem to be for. This Beginning of yours lets the Reader see how weak and childish your Judgment will be thought to be by some, and what they may look for in your following Enterprize.

P. 6, 7. You have set down my *Scheme* and *your own* in Columns one against another, that the Reader may compare them together; for which I thank you or your *Amanuensis* (who it seems is not so weak-sighted as his Principal) because hereby the apparent Difference between the one and the other, may easily be discern'd; and I doubt not but it hath been observ'd, from the Placing of one against the other, that the Former is plain, obvious, easie, intelligible and adjusted to the Holy Scriptures; but that the Latter is unintelligible, obscure, perplex'd, larded by you with *Ifs* and idle *Suppositions*, and no way agreeable to the Discoveries made unto us in the inspir'd Writings. All judicious Persons that have compar'd the Schemes

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together, which you have made easie to do at *one View*, think thus of them. Wherefore, *Sir*, this is a great Favour you have done me, tho' you did not intend it to be such,

P. 8. You say thus of your self, *I stedfastly and constantly affirm the Decrees of God to be absolute, and the Term of Man's Life to be fix'd and immutable; yet upon certain Foresight what means of life and health the Man will choose or refuse in the Circumstances which God foresees him to be in, and gives him power and liberty to make choice of.*—How *stedfast* and *constant* your *Affirmations* are, your Writings testify, if Self-contradictions be a Sign of Stedfastness and Constancy. Doth any considerate Man think that those *Decrees* are *Absolute*, and (as you call them in another Place) *unconditional*, *fix'd*, and *immutable*, which wholly depend upon our *choosing* or *refusing the Means*, &c. Doth not this arbitrary *choosing* or *refusing* annul the *Absoluteness* and *Immutableness* of the Decrees? Is the Term of Man's Life *fix'd*, and yet hath he *power and liberty to make choice* of that which may *change* and *alter*? And if he hath such a Power and Liberty, can we think that he will not sometimes make use of them? And when he doth so, is this consistent with the fix'd Term of Life?

Life? When you find your ſelf able to reconcile theſe Things, let me hear from you again, if your *Amanuenſis* be at leiſure, and if he can help you to bring the *Two Poles* together.

P. 8. Your Words are theſe, *I do conſtantly affirm the Decrees of Election and Reprobation to be in reſpect of God, certain and unchangeable; yet as to the moving Cauſe, I affirm Election to be founded on, or proceed originally from his Grace and Mercy upon Foreſight of Man's Miſery* —— and *that of Reprobation to be from his certain Preſcience that the Sinner (tho' aſſiſted by gracious Aids, &c.) will oppoſe and fruſtrate the Grace which otherwiſe would not be only ſufficient, but effectual to Salvation.* You have ſo often given the Readers of your *Theological Scheme*, Occaſion to interpret your *conſtantly affirming any thing*, in a quite contrary Meaning, that now your boaſting of your *Conſtancy*, is a meer Jeſt. As in the preſent Caſe, you affirm the Decrees of Election and Reprobation to be in reſpect of God certain and unchangeable, yet as to the *moving Cauſe* they are uncertain and changeable. But how can there be any certainty and unchangeableneſs, when, notwithſtanding the abſolute Decree, *the Grace of God may*

be fruſtrated, and tho' *ſufficient* to Salvation, yet may become *ineffectual* to that End, that *very End* which was ſincerely intended by God to be accompliſhed? So that tho' the *Intention* was upright and ſincere in God, yet, according to you, God is *not able* to go on with his Deſign, becauſe Man *will not let him do it*; but by his ſuperior Power, baffles and diſappoints the Purpoſe of Heaven. If the Reader can digeſt this, he hath the Stomach of an Oſtrich.

P. 9. You ſay, *The ſufficient Aid and Grace for performing the re-ſtipulated Condition is promiſed in this Covenant, unleſs it be obſtinately oppoſed and fruſtrated, namely, to circumciſe the Heart.* Deut. 30. 6, 8. *to give a heart of Fleſh*, &c. Here, *Sir*, you play the Sophiſter, and artfully hide the true Senſe of the Covenant of Grace from the Reader; for the Promiſe contain'd in it is Abſolute, and the Grace which is promiſed, is not only *ſufficient* but *effectual*; for the Covenant runs thus, Deut. 30, 6. *The Lord thy God will circumciſe thy heart, and the heart of thy Seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, that thou mayſt live.* And the ſame we have in *Ezek*, 11. 19, 20. *I will take the ſtony heart out of their fleſh,*

flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh, that they may walk in my Statutes, &c. Now, I ask what is this but such a *Heart* as is flexible and compliant, and doth not obstinately oppose and frustrate the Grace of God, but is actually brought over to a closing with it? But you represent it quite otherwise, and do in effect make the *Heart of Flesh* to be a *stony Heart*. Such gross Fallacies and Impositions as these, must not be born with. The Covenant that God makes with his People is, that they shall be enabled by the Divine Aid, to perform the Condition of the Covenant; which shews how unadvisedly and vainly you add, *We cannot reasonably imagine a Covenant of Grace to be a Promise upon an impossible Condition.* Alas, good Dr. your Scheme deceives you, and possesses you with Notions that are inconsistent with the Tenour of the Covenant of Grace, which secures to all those with whom 'tis made, the certain Ability of performing the Conditions included in the Covenant. But still your Head runs on *impossible Conditions*; and you merrily tell us, that *to promise and assure Heaven to such only as shall skip up to the Moon, and thence to other Planets, wou'd be a delusive Scoff, rather than a favourable Promise.* Mr. *Dean*, you have forgot

what you ſaid P. 3. that you would in your enſuing papers, *Diſappoint all expectation of pedantick Repartees*: But this which ~~the~~ you uſe now is not only Pedantick, but Prophane. Who wou'd have thought that your ſolemn Poſt you are in, in the Church, and the grand Importance of the Subject, ſhould not have reminded you of being more Grave and Serious, and have forbid you, in a Matter that ought to be treated with all Gravity, to talk of *skipping up to the Moon*? You refer, I ſuppoſe, to your Agility in your younger Days? And we ſee that Planet hath ſome influence on you ſtill.

P. 11. I having quoted *Rom.* 9. 18. it being directly to the Purpoſe which I cited it for, all that I can get from you, is only this, *I reject the Interpretation of that Text.* Very Magiſterially ſaid indeed! And this is an eaſie way of Anſwering any other Text that is brought againſt you. And this is your Way in other Places of your *Vindication*; you value no Arguments that are levell'd againſt you; you frequently take no Notice of what is alledg'd; you ſeem to be above it, or if you are pleas'd to do any ſuch thing, your Buſineſs is to ſhuffle and evade.

P. 13. You ſay, *You have not at all in your* Scheme, *founded Election on any thing but the good Pleaſure of God.* Have you not *Sir?* Then what is the Reaſon that in p. 128. of your Book, you condemn the *Sublapſarians* for *holding that Election* (as well as Preterition) *is ex mero beneplacito?* Why do you find fault with thoſe that embrace that Opinion, if your *Scheme* grounds Election on nothing but the good Pleaſure of God?

P. 16. Whereas I had objected to you, That *your* Scheme *repreſents the Sovereign Being to depend on the Arbitrement and Determination of his Creatures in his eternal Council*; your Anſwer is, *That God's Actions and Councils no otherwiſe depend on Creatures than a Sovereign's Rewards and Puniſhments depend upon the good or bad Behaviour of his Subjects.* Do you know what you ſay, *Sir?* This perfectly deſtroys what you pretended to aſſert concerning Election, that it is founded wholly on the *good Pleaſure of God*; for if the *deſigning of Rewards*, that is, of everlaſting Life and Happineſs, depends on the foreſeen *good Behaviour* of thoſe who are to ſhare in that Happineſs, then it neceſſarily follows, that that Deſignation,

tion, or Decree of the Sovereign Being, depends on the *Arbitrement* and *Determination* of his Creatures. I don't ſee how you can deny this. But I obſerve you affect to refine upon the *Sublapſarian* Scheme, and to find things in it which were never intended, and to exclude ſome others which belong to it. It is the Misfortune of ſuch Projectors to confound and perplex Things. You have got into a new Road of your own making, and you wander in it, and loſe your ſelf, and don't know where you are. Take my Advice, *Sir*, for once, and return into the old Path; that which all the eminent, judicious and pious Fathers, as well as the Sons of the Church of *England* (unto ſome of whoſe Preferments in the Church you have ſucceeded) trod in from the Time of the *Reformation* from *Popery*. Think your ſelf bound in Gratitude, if not in Conſcience, to defend their Doctrines, as well as to enjoy their Emoluments.

P. 16. You ſay, *you do not juſtifie the Expreſſion of Election ex fide præviſa*, and yet at the very ſame time you do moſt manifeſtly juſtifie it, as I ſhew'd before, by finding fault with the *Sublapſarian* Doctrine, which founds Election on the mere Will of God from Eternity.

P. 17.

P. 17. I ſee you are reſolv'd not to quit what you had ſaid of the 17th Article of the Church of *England*, viz. *That the Doctrine of Preſcience is neceſſarily imply'd therein.* And what was that *Preſcience* but a Fore-ſight of *Faith* and *good Works*, tho' now you talk in an other Strain, to darken and obſcure what you had ſaid, merely to avoid what I charg'd you with?

P. 18. You ſay, I *do not produce any Evidence that Previſion is not neceſſarily to be ſuppoſ'd in this* 17th *Article* of our Church. I anſwer, there was no neceſſity of producing the Evidence, becauſe it lies plainly in the Words themſelves; for there it is ſaid, *that Predeſtination to life is of thoſe whom God hath choſen in Chriſt out of Mankind; in Chriſt*, that is, on conſideration of the Merits of Chriſt, and nothing elſe. And further 'tis ſaid, *It was decreed by his Council to bring them by Chriſt to everlaſting Salvation*, that is, by Chriſt's meritorious Undertakings, and for Chriſt's Sake, and on no other Conſideration; but you with your *Previſion* ſuppoſe another. And when in this Article it is afterwards ſaid, that theſe *Elect* Perſons are *Juſtify'd freely*, that is, as 'tis

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explain'd in the 11th Article, *only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, doth not this make it evident, that *Prevision* (namely of Faith and good Works) is not to be suppos'd in the 17th Article?

P. 18. You put this Question to me, *Did God, think you, decree to punish and damn Men without Prescience of their Demerits? Remember how your self sometimes own the Prescience*, p. 135. I remember it, but it is of no Advantage to you, as you might have been satisfy'd from what I expresly deliver'd in my late Reflections on your Theological Scheme. There I told you, that God considering Man in a laps'd condition, and consequently liable to Punishment, even Damnation, it follows that on *this* Account, Reprobation may be said to have been on Foresight of the Demerits of Men; but in an *other* Respect, namely, as we consider it as a bare *Preterition* or *Non-election*, it is from God's absolute Will and Pleasure, according to *Rom.* 9. 18. For God by virtue of his Sovereiguty, may deny saving Grace to some, becatse as he is supreme Lord, he is indebted to none; the Eternal Decree looking upon all Men as fallen, and in a State of Sin, he could deal with them as he pleas'd; accordingly he pas'd by some, tho' he might have pas'd

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by all, and that moſt juſtly, becauſe they were all alike in his Sight, when they were conſider'd in the Decree. But I have explain'd this further and more diſtinctly, in an other Place, and therefore I remit the Reader thither.

P. 19. When you labour to prove, *That Univerſal Grace is not inconſiſtent with the Election of ſome, and Non-election of others*, you quote *Gen.* 3. 15. and call it *an unlimited Covenant of Grace*. But you ſhould not only have call'd it ſo, but have prov'd it to be of that Nature; which you do not ſo much as attempt to do. I know ſome very learned Men, both of our Church and of the Diſſenters from it, favour the Doctrine of *univerſal Grace*, but none of them preſume to lay any Streſs on this Text, for there are no Words here that give Occaſion for it. It ſeems, you were put hard to it to defend your Doctrine, when you pitch'd upon this Place of Scripture to found it upon. But you undertake to maintain it by this Example or Similitude; *A King's promiſing a general Pardon to Rebels upon their Submiſſion may well conſiſt with his purpoſe to puniſh willful relapſes to Rebellion.* You are, *Sir*, a great Artiſt indeed, if you can make this ſerve your purpoſe; for tho' you may by this

Simile explain and ſet forth God's *Mercy* and his *Severity*, the one in pardoning thoſe that Rebel againſt him, but repent of their Rebellion; the other in puniſhing thoſe that relapſe into the ſame Fault, and are impenitent; yet this comes not up at all to the preſent Buſineſs, namely, the Eternal Decree of Heaven concerning the Everlaſting State of thoſe that are Elected or not Elected; for their Condition is *irreverſibly fix'd*; and it is ſuppos'd in the Decree, that ſome cannot and will not repent; and therefore the great King and Sovereign hath no where promis'd an *univerſal Pardon*, that is, a Pardon to every individual Perſon in the World; for this deſtroys the very Notion of *Predeſtination*.

You wou'd prove univerſal Grace from the 2d and 31ſt *Articles* of the Church of *England*, where you ſay, *The Offering of Chriſt is ſaid to be a Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World, both Original and Actual*. As to the former of theſe Articles, you are miſtaken; for there is no ſuch Paſſage there as *Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World*. It is only in the latter Article that thoſe general Terms are uſed; and there is no Man that hath peruſed the Bible without prejudice, but can ſatisfy himſelf, that thoſe univerſal Terms are not

not to be always taken ſtrictly; for in a thouſand Places you muſt underſtand them in a reſtrain'd Senſe, or elſe you'll make mad Interpretations of Scripture. And as for thoſe Words in the Adminiſtration of the Sacrament, *The Body of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt which was given for thee*, we muſt interpret them not as Words of Doctrine, but of Hope and Charity; otherwiſe we can't underſtand our Church when ſhe mentions *the Number of God's Faithful and Elect Children*, in the Office of *Publick Baptiſm*, and *the Number of the Elect* in the Office for *Burial*; which acquaints us, that 'tis our Church's Perſwaſion, that there is a *certain Number* of Men that are Elected, and that ſaving Grace is vouchſafed to none but them.

P. 20. You blame me for charging you with *allowing Spiritual Liberty to unregenerate Men, and that 'tis the natural Prerogative of every Man's Will to determine it ſelf to ſpiritual Good.* Never certainly did any Man play faſt and looſe in that palpable Manner that you do. You wou'd not be thought to grant *ſpiritual Liberty* to all Men, and yet you zealouſly maintain the very Principle from which it naturally and inevitably follows; for you profeſſedly aſſert *the indifferency of the Will* in all

Men, good and bad, regenerate and unregenerate; for you hold that it belongs to all Men *as they are Men* to will and chooſe what is Spiritually Good or Evil. Yea, as to the latter of theſe, you affirm, that our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, by virtue of the Indifferency of his Will, as he was Man, had a Will and Power to Sin; the natural and unavoidable Conſequence of which is, that he might have been *Damn'd*, and took his Portion in Hell, tho' he came to ſave others from it. This is ſuch horrid and ſhocking Doctrine to pious Ears, that I forbear to mention it any further; but ſtand amaz'd to ſee you upholding and vindicating ſo impious an Opinion. Some Words which you uſe on this Occaſion are ſhifted off by you to ſome Body elſe, and you ſay, *The Words are only quoted by you*; how true this is, you know beſt; but this is certain, that you have plain expreſſions of *your own* wherein you defend that Doctrine; and in this late *Vindication* of your Theological Scheme, you take upon you again the Defence of that wretched Notion; for you ſay, *It is acknowledg'd by all, that Power as conſider'd with concurrence of the Will, may be accounted as a Principle of Sin; but Power to Sin conſider'd abſtractly, and in contradiſtinction from Power in conjunction with the*

the Will, is no ſinful Principle. Sir, I wiſh you would not debauch your *Metaphyſics* ſo notoriouſly, and give way to ſuch lame and inſignificant *Diſtinctions* as theſe, for they will but make the Framer of them ridiculous among judicious Perſons. For you had maintain'd, that there was a Power in our Saviour's Will to Sin, and yet now you wou'd ſo diſtinguiſh between the *Power* and the *Will*, that you wou'd wholly exempt the former of theſe from Sinfulneſs; but this is impoſſible, becauſe the Power to Sin, is ſo far a ſinful Power, as it tends to Sin, and naturally leads to it.

P. 23, 24. You are very angry that I charge you with *holding the Salvation of Heathens in defiance of* Acts 4. 12. *Neither is their Salvation in any other*, &c. and yet you take no care to clear this Text, and to ſatisfy the Reader that it makes not againſt you. But without giving any Reaſon for what you ſay, you with your wonted Confidence aſſert, that Heathens may have the Benefit of Chriſt's Redemption, tho' *they have no cogniſance of it*; they *may obtain Salvation without the explicit Knowledg of the Perſon by whom the Benefit was obtain'd, and without a clear Knowledge of the Methods of procuring it.* All which is mere Fiction, and will appear to be

be ſo to any Man that conſiders theſe following particulars. *Firſt*, The Heathens have not the *outward means of Salvation* indulg'd to them, that is, they have not the Preaching of the Goſpel; from whence we may reaſonably gather, that their Salvation was not intended. *Secondly*, They are deſtitute of *Faith*, *which cometh by hearing*, and is the neceſſary Inſtrument of Salvation now under the Goſpel diſpenſation. *Thirdly*, They are not capable of doing *good Works*, for thoſe muſt neceſſarily have *Faith* for their Principle. Theſe particular Heads which I have briefly mention'd, are founded on expreſs Words of Scripture, on the Suffrage of the moſt Ancient Fathers of the Primitive Church, and on the 11th, 12th, 13th and 18th Articles of the Church of *England*; to which you may remember you ſolemnly Subſcrib'd. But all this while I ſpeak of thoſe Heathens, who have been *ſince* our Saviour's coming into the World (for the Condition of thoſe that liv'd *before* is different,) and beſides, I ſpeak of their Salvation in an *ordinary Way*, and according to the Diſcoveries we have in the Goſpel. But if we ſpeak of the *extraordinary* and *unrevealed Way* of God's diſpenſing Salvation, I charitably believe that ſome, yea many of them, may be ſaved: For we muſt not preſcribe to the Sovereign Power and

and Unſearchable Wiſdom of God, nor limit his Mercy and Clemency, when he hath not done ſo himſelf.

In the ſame Page you ſay, *Impetration may be univerſal, altho' Application is to be particular, and many do not perform the Condition.* We know whoſe Language this is, and who coin'd this Diſtinction of *Impetration* and *Application*, which hath been us'd to very ill-purpoſe. And ſo it is now by You, and very impertinently in the preſent Caſe; yea, very falſly, for where there is a ſincere Impetration, there is always an effectual Application.

P. 25. You ſay, *I quote your Theological Scheme*, p. 341 *for a Paſſage which is not there, nor any where elſe.* But be not offended, *Sir*, if I tell you that the Infirmity which you ſo often complain of, hath hindred you from ſeeing that Paſſage, but other Men's Eyes can diſcern it.

P. 26. You fancy that I miſtake you about what you ſaid concerning the *Activity* or *Paſſivity of the Will*; but thoſe that have peruſed your Words, are perſwaded that the Miſtake is on your ſide; and they do not think you over-abound with Senſe, when you diſtinguiſh ſo quaintly between the

the *Will's being passive in respect of Grace*, but *active and passive in respect of the Person*: For the Person being wholly directed by Divine Grace, and the Divine Grace being design'd to make a Change in the Person, there is no reason to insist on that double respect of *Person* and *Grace*. But we know 'tis your Talent to deal in needless distinctions.

P. 26. Whereas I had told you, that *you hold Grace is made Efficacious by the Determination of Man's Will*; Your Answer is, *You remember no such Expression us'd by you.* I have not your Book by me, to look for that Expression; yet I know your Memory is none of the Best, especially when you have no Mind it should be refresh'd: But you can't but know and remember you tell us in express Terms, *p.* 27. That *Grace which in it self is Efficacious, is made Ineffectual by the obstinate Resistance of the Will*; which fully expresses what you say you can't remember. I only observe here, that you are unreasonably Nice in your Distinction of *Inefficacious* and *Ineffectual*, merely to evade and put by a plain Truth which you are not dispos'd to receive. You might have seen the Vanity of your Distinction in the *Reverse* of these Terms, namely, *Efficacious*

cious and *Effectual*; for if the Grace of God be *Efficacious* (which implies the ſucceſsful Power of it) it is the ſame with being *Effectual*; for pray tell me what ſerves the *Efficacy* for, but to make it Succeſsful, and then it can't but be *Effectual*, even according to you.

P. 27, 28. My Citation out of St. *Auguſtine*, *viz.* That *no Free-will of Man can reſiſt God*, is miſerably repreſented by you; for you ſay, *It is evident that he ſpeaks of God's Almighty Power and abſolute Will in Matters reſolv'd on and decreed; but we are diſcourſing of an Hypotheſis in Divine Preſcience, in order of nature not yet will'd and decreed to be Abſolute.* Nay then, if you come with ſuch wild Comments as theſe, nothing but the Decay of your ſight can excuſe you from Cenſure: No, nor that neither, for your Amanuenſis might have turn'd to that Place in the Father, and have ſatisfy'd you, that no ſuch Senſe as this which you offer can be made of the Father's Words. And beſides, you are forc'd to fly to your uſual Aſylum of feign'd *Diſtinctions*, making *Two different Wills* in God, and yet inventing an Hypotheſis which clearly deſtroys both thoſe Wills. Good Sir, are you ſo vain as to imagin that this is an Anſwer to St. *Auguſtine*, whoſe plain and obvious Senſe is, that 'tis impoſſible to reſiſt the Will and fruſtrate the Deſign of the Almighty, when he intends the Converſion and Salvation of any Man?

I will ſet down the Father's Words at length, which are theſe; *De Corrept. & Grat.* cap. 14. *Deo volenti ſalvum facere, nullum hominum reſiſtit Arbitrium: ſic enim Velle aut Nolle in volentis aut nolentis eſt poteſtate, ut Divinam Voluntatem non impediat, nec ſuperet poteſtatem.* That is, *When God willeth the Salvation of any Man, no Will of his can reſiſt it; for to Will or not to Will are ſo far only in the Power of him that Willeth or not, that he can't hinder the Will of God, nor baffle his Power.* You aſſert the contrary, and hold, that we are able to hinder our Converſion and Sanctification, even when God really intends to Convert and Sanctify us; becauſe elſe the Liberty of the Will, you will ſay, is not preſerv'd. But are you not ſenſible, that this renders the Eternal Counſil and Purpoſe of God vain and inſignificant? Beſides, it is abſurd and irrational to contend, that the Work of God's Grace may be totally reſiſted, when 'tis the great and proper Work of this Divine Grace to take away this Reſiſtance. Further, 'tis obſervable that you and your Friends moſt frankly acknowledge, that God often *over-rules the Wills*, Inclinations and Intentions of Men, with reſpect to Temporal Things; to bring about the Accompliſhment of what he hath Decreed, and to promote the Deſigns of his Providence: How can you then, notwithſtanding this open Profeſſion, refuſe to own that Men's Wills, with reſpect

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to Spiritual Things, may be *over-rul'd and chang'd by irreſiſtable Grace?* Do you not hereby aſſert the Thing which you deny?

P. 28. You blame me for ſaying, *You make Sanctification, or inherent Righteouſneſs, the formal Cauſe of Juſtification.* But any one that reads what you have ſaid on the Point of Juſtification, will grant that you do ſo; tho' you lay it at *Forbes*'s Door, who put this Diſtinction (and you are naturally inclin'd to liſten to Diſtinctions) into your Head, *viz. That Sanctification is the formal Cauſe of Juſtification, if you take Juſtification concretely; but if you take it abſtractly, then it is not.* And 'tis plain, that you take it *Concretely*, and confound good Works with Faith. Sir, this is your conſtant Guiſe; you ſay things, and then are aſham'd of them, and ſtrive to ſhift them off. You make Juſtification to conſiſt in inherent Righteouſneſs, and yet you wou'd be thought not to do it; otherwiſe you wou'd not have blam'd me for charging you with it. One wou'd think you and I have liv'd long enough to be acquainted with the Senſe of our Church, in the *firſt Part* of the *Homily of Salvation*, where are theſe Words, *Faith doth not ſhut out Repentance, Hope, Love, Dread and Fear of God, to be joyn'd with Faith in every Man that is Juſtify'd; but it ſhutteth them out from the Office of Juſtifying.* Sir, You being a Son of the Church of *England*, ought to ſpeak the Language of your Mother, and conſe-

quently you are to profeſs, that 'tis *the Office of Faith alone* (even conſider'd without good Works) *to juſtify us*.

P. 29. *I accuſe you*, you ſay, *for telling the World, that 'tis no where expreſs'd in Scripture, that Faith alone juſtifies, tho' St.* Paul *is peremptory on the other ſide.* Yet here you confeſs the Truth of the Accuſation, and will have the Apoſtle to be on your ſide, by your miſunderſtanding of thoſe plain Texts which I alledg'd out of him.

Permit me to be ſo free with you, as to tell you, that ſome part of what follows in your Paper is downright Ribaldry, Farce, and *Grubſtreet*, which perhaps you may call *Wit*, a Commodity which you may pretend to now at paſt Fourſcore, tho' you did not ever before. The Sum of your Farce is this, "You Dream that you had been all "Day long abus'd, revil'd and rail'd at, "and that you bore it with wonderful Pa- "tience and Silence; and, when Night "came on, you like a meek and Self-de- "nying Creature, gave order that the Re- "viler ſhou'd be lighted home." And now your Head runs upon nothing but *dark Night, Links and Torches, Lighting home*, and *bidding good Night*. Theſe are the Whimſies of the diſturb'd Head of a *Stone-blind Man*, who fancies all others to be *in the dark* as well as himſelf. I obſerve, that you did not begin to write till you were in this dark Condition: Then it was that you ſet up for new Schemes, and now fiercely de-

defend them, and draw your Pen againſt thoſe that oppoſe you; and whilſt you remonſtrate againſt *Railing*, you are your ſelf a Railer of the firſt Rate, and fill your Papers with villifying and reproachful Reflections, as Your Readers cannot but take Notice; When You tell them and me, That I am *a ſtiff and obſtinate Contender*, p. 1. And when you charge me with *frivolous Cavils*, p. 4, and 9. *Confuſion of Thoughts*, p. 12. *Unaccountable Prejudice*, p. 14. *Slily leaving one Point, and running to an other*, p. 18. You ſay, I Act *according to my wonted Sincerity*, p. 20. That I am ſo little a Chriſtian, that *I forget true Chriſtianity*, p 21. That *I publiſh to the World falſe as well as reproachful Acceuſations*, p. 24. You charge me with *ſcornful Reflections*, p. 25. With want of *Candor* and *Truth*, p. 28. With *Cavils, Prejudice, Partiality*, p. 29. You tell me, *I am bewilder'd in the Dark*, p. 31. You wiſh me *a better Underſtanding and a ſounder Judgment*, p. 31. This is ſome of the Language which you are pleas'd to beſtow upon me; and *you wipe your mouth* (as the Harlot did) and feign an Innocency, as if you had been *Complementing* and *Careſſing* me all this while. This hath been the Practice of ſome others whom I have had occaſion to deal with; while they inveigh againſt Railing, there are none that delight in it more. This is not without great Policy, 'tis to be ſuppos'd, for hereby they think to render their Adverſaries *Odious*; and moreover, by this means they

they hope to hinder them for the Future, from freely and impartially ſpeaking the Truth. You think fit to imitate theſe great Politicians, and in the *Title-Page* of Your Letter profanely apply that Text, 1 Pet. 3. 9. *Not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing*! I am not provok'd by ſuch injurious and unchriſtian Inſinuations, for I'm ſatisfy'd that I have not one offenſive Word in my whole Papers: But you are extreamly nettled and diſturb'd, becauſe you have found ſo much Truth and plain Dealing in them. Remember, *Sir*, and repent that you have *rail'd* even againſt Heaven, and have *revil'd* the Bleſſed Jeſus himſelf, by attributing to him a *Power and Will to ſin*. But I charitably conſider and pity Your Condition, I mean that Blindneſs which you have brought upon your ſelf by your own Fault, whereby you think all thoſe are in the Dark, and want to be *Lighted* who embrace not your confuſed Scheme of Divinity. This unhappy indiſpoſition of yours corrupts your Judgment, and cauſes you to give falſe Reaſons and Accounts of Things; like the old Wife in *Seneca*, who having loſt the Uſe of her Sight, complain'd that the Rooms were dark. I adviſe you as a Friend to keep your Blindneſs to your ſelf, and don't proclaim it to the World.

I had almoſt forgot to take Notice of that remaining Piece of Your *Wit* with which You conclude, I mean Your *recommending Dr.* Hammond's *Torch to me, to illu-*

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minate me. I perceive you read Author's but ſlightly, and can give no true Account of them; for You falſely aver, *That Dr.* Hamond's *Diſcourſe was convincing, and prevail'd on Biſhop* Sanderſon. The Truth of the Matter is this, Dr. *Hammond* had a Mind to gain to his Side ſo great and conſiderable a Proſelite as that learned and excellent Prelate; and this made him ſtrongly fanſie that he was ſo, that is, a real Convert to that Party, and that he had alter'd his Scheme. This Miſtake aroſe in that worthy Dr. from the Biſhop's mild Way of writing to him, and treating him with great Deference and Modeſty. But 'tis certain that the Biſhop was a tight *Calviniſt*, and never chang'd his Judgment, as may be ſeen in his *laſt Letters*, even the *Laſt of all* to Dr. *Hammond*, and he continu'd in the ſame Sentiments to the Day of his Death. You have little Reaſon then to recommend to me Dr. *Hamond*'s *Torch:* Pardon me, good *Sir*, if I ſay, 'tis rather an *Ignis fatuus* of your own ſetting up, and we ſee into what *Precipices* it hath unhappily led you.

Laſtly, Your Reader may obſerve, that whilſt you are pretending to make *pious Wiſhes*, you join them with mere Banter, and *bid me good Night* at Mid-day; as much as to ſay, You had rather purchaſe the repute of being Comical and Ludicrous, than avoid the Shame of running into Soleciſms, and abſurd Ways of ſpeaking.

And

And now, after this *Freedom* which I have taken (and you muſt expect no other from me, for I have not bred up my Pen to be a *Slave*,) let us part as Chriſtian Friends and Brethren in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and who were once *Collegues* in the ſame *Learned* and *Renowned Society*; which bears the ſame Character ſtill, and I can aſſure you, paſſionately condoles, with me, the Infirmity you at preſent labour under, and we heartily wiſh you ſome degree, at leaſt, of Recovery from it, if it be the Divine Pleaſure.

One Word more, You call your Paper which you ſent me a *Letter*, yet, as if you retracted that Name, you refuſe to cloſe it with the uſual Formality with which a *Letter* is wont to End: But herein I will not imitate you, but with due Reſpect and Deference, Subſcribe my ſelf,

Reverend *SIR*,

Your humble and obedient Servant,

J. EDWARDS.

FINIS.